



pennsylvania  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY  
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# PA Engage!

≡ IMPACT STORIES ≡

FY 2020-21



Kingston, PA



**11,221**  
ENGAGE SURVEYS  
COMPLETED

**4,819**  
REFERRALS  
TO PARTNERS



**PA Engage!**  
**METRICS**



**1,842**  
FOCUS GROUPS  
& BUSINESS WALKS

**256**  
ENGAGE! CALLERS  
ACROSS PA

**9,011**  
ACTION PLANS DEVELOPED







# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## WHO WE ARE

DCED's Engage! program is a statewide initiative to proactively contact businesses to help them identify their opportunities and challenges and offer targeted technical assistance and solutions.

## WHAT WE DO

Engage! experts develop a direct relationship with CEOs and business owners to listen to their needs and concerns. Working together, the business and the Engage! team create a personalized action plan with recommendations, technical assistance, and follow-up steps. The plan includes connecting the business to the right local resources to help them strengthen and grow.

A key goal of Engage! is to create meaningful dialogue to help build lasting relationships with businesses. Through ongoing, proactive interactions with business owners and management teams, Engage! is able to create effective personalized action plans to address company needs — no matter how large or small.

## HOW WE WORK

One of our Engage! team members will initiate contact with your business via phone, email, or letter. Once connected, we will schedule a listening session, whether in-person or virtual, including:

- **Assessment:** Engage! team member will meet with you to learn more about your challenges and opportunities.
- **Referrals & Technical Assistance:** Following this discussion, your Engage! team will prepare a customized action plan and help connect you to local resources based on your specific needs. Ongoing communications will ensure you always have access to the kind of business and professional assistance you need.





## ≡ SUCCESS STORIES ≡



### PREEN USA CORPORATION

Eldred, PA  
North Central Region

**Preen USA Corporation** in Eldred, PA produces pet treats and anticipated growth of approximately 30% through the end of 2021. To accommodate this growth the company was interested in purchasing two pieces of equipment to allow them to produce additional products. The Engage! team provided information about a variety of loan programs to help make this purchase possible.

Preen USA Corp. also expressed interest in improvements that could be made to their facility regarding energy efficiency. To assist with exploring the potential for energy improvements and potential grants, Engage! introduced company leaders to the Northwest Industrial Resource Center and PennTAP to explore the potential for an energy efficiency and compressor study.

The company is continuing to work with the NC PREP network moving forward, a connection that was facilitated by the Engage! program.



### DUVALL LEATHERWORK

Kingston, PA  
Northeast Region

Like many companies, **Duvall Leatherwork**, a retailer of leather products, was hit hard by supply chain and workforce issues during the pandemic. Engage! assisted the company with pivoting into e-commerce and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques, helping the company thrive during this economically challenging time.

Duvall is located on a highly traveled road and has their production facility and showroom in the same building. The success from online sales once consumers were comfortable to spend and the wave of online shopping to cope with the pandemic has led Duvall to move their production to a smaller size facility in the Hanover Industrial Park in Luzerne County from their existing facility in Kingston.





## ≡ SUCCESS STORIES ≡



### SUSQUEHANNA KAYAK AND CANOE RENTALS

Falls, PA and Wyoming, PA  
Northern Tier Region

The hospitality industry struggled during 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but with some assistance from Engage!, **Susquehanna Kayak and Canoe Rentals** had one of its most successful seasons.

During the pandemic, many families canceled out-of-state vacations and instead opted for “staycations” and opportunities to get outdoors and enjoy nature. Susquehanna Kayak and Canoe Rentals expressed a desire to Engage! to raise awareness of their business to potential client segment of individuals who were exploring new outdoor activities. Engage! worked with the business to coordinate activities to increase visibility and garner news coverage, including a ribbon cutting ceremony. These activities drew new clients to the sport of kayaking and helped the business remain strong through the pandemic.



### LEON CONSTRUCTION

Erie, PA  
Northwest Region

**Leon Construction** is a family-owned business that was started in 2003 by Ukrainian immigrants who arrived in Erie a few years earlier. While most of the business focused on siding, windows and doors, the owner, Leonid Kokhanevich, had purchased the former Continental Rubber factory one block away from the company's headquarters with plans to renovate the dilapidated structure into an indoor for-rent storage facility that offered some retail on a main thoroughfare in Erie.

When Engage! reached out to Leon Construction and learned of this plan, a meeting was immediately arranged with the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network (SSJNN), a nonprofit focused on revitalization of this Erie neighborhood and works with local businesses to achieve this. Connections were also made to the City of Erie, which assembled a team including parking and permitting officials, and the Erie County Redevelopment Authority, which is assisting with locating financing for the project. By establishing connections between the business owners, who are newcomers to Erie, and Erie officials, Engage! has helped this project move forward, the business owners with realizing their goals and the neighborhood with revitalizing a key building.